

Spring 2008

Inthemion

North Carolina State Capitol Foundation

April Declared Raleigh History Month

By Terra Steinbeiser, Education & Publications

At the request of the Raleigh Heritage Trail, Raleigh Mayor Charles Meeker has officially proclaimed April 2008 as "Raleigh History Month."

The State Capitol is one of the original members of the Raleigh Heritage Trail, a consortium of local cultural and historic sites whose common goals are to promote the understanding of the history of the City of Oaks and to better serve residents and visitors through shared educational programming. Ten sites make up the trail, including the African-American Cultural Complex, Haywood Hall House and Gardens, Historic Oak View County Park, Historic Yates Mill County Park, Joel Lane Museum House, Mordecai Historic Park, the North Carolina State Capitol, Olivia Raney History Library, Raleigh City Museum, and the Richard B. Harrison Library.

Throughout April, the Raleigh Heritage Trail sites will offer a variety of educational programs and events to encourage Raleigh citizens to visit, learn from, and enjoy the historic sites and cultural facilities located in and around the area.

April was chosen to promote Raleigh's history because the land used to create the city was deeded on April 15, 1792. The sites of the RHT are uniquely qualified to tell the life story of the city,

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Sir Walter Raleigh



Edward T. Davis

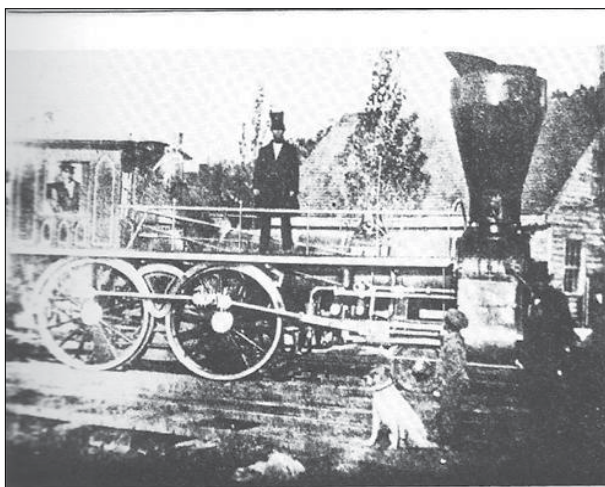
The month of April has been declared "Raleigh History Month" by Mayor Charles Meeker. It is, therefore, appropriate to contemplate the significance of the Capitol to the city and to the state. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, North Carolina was coined the "Rip Van Winkle State", "The Ireland of America" and perhaps worst - "The Second Nazareth". In the 1830's however, economic progressives from the Piedmont and western counties took control of politics and the popular press and forever changed the direction of the state. A new state constitution was ratified in 1835 which gave greater representation to the western counties and which encouraged political parties to appeal more directly to the people. Whigs and subsequent Democrats were elected on programs of internal improvement and public education.

The reforms of the 1830's resulted in a symbolic turning point. In June, 1840, North Carolinians gathered to celebrate "The Great Festival gotten up by the citizens of Raleigh, in honor of those two Magnificent Public Works, our NEW CAPITOL and the RALEIGH AND GASTON RAIL ROAD." Two very powerful symbols of progress were realized by the reformers: transportation which would finally deliver our goods to outside markets and a modern new Capitol.

While the construction of the longest railroad in the world was a major accomplishment for state leaders, future modes of transportation would also assist in bringing commerce to the state. The importance of the railroad has diminished. The magnificent work of art that is our Capitol has only appreciated with time and our care. Please take a moment to visit the Capitol and admire the foresight of the progressive leadership that made the building a reality.

The locomotive 'Romulus Saunders' ran on the Raleigh and Gaston Rail Road in the early 1850s. In this early photograph, company president Dr. William J. Hawkins stands on the running board of the 4-4-0 wood burning locomotive.

Photo courtesy of
State Archives



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Anthemion

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For more information about the State Capitol, visit our Web site at www.ncstatecapitol.org, or call 919-733-4994.



Raleigh History Month *Continued from cover*

from the time of colonial settlers living in and developing the region that would one day become the capital city, to modern museums and libraries that preserve and protect documents and artifacts that serve as a tangible link to the past.

Part of Raleigh's earliest history can be viewed at Historic Yates Mill County Park. This mill, believed to have been built around 1756, served Wake County as a water-powered grist mill for more than 200 years. Of the 70 gristmills that once served Wake County, Yates Mill is the only one still standing. For those interested in learning more about several of Raleigh's founding families, the Joel Lane House (1770s), Mordecai Historic Park (1785), and Haywood Hall (1790) offer a look at the men and women who shaped the fledgling city in its earliest years.

Occupied by Union forces at the end of the Civil War, the State Capitol, continues to serve as a symbol of the state's power. Down the street from the Capitol is the Raleigh City Museum, housed in Raleigh's first skyscraper, the historic Briggs Building (1874). This small museum



collects, preserves, and interprets the history of Raleigh. In eastern part of the city, Historic Oak View County Park (1829) illustrates a more rural lifestyle by showcasing typical living and working conditions on a nineteenth century cotton farm.

Just down the road from Oak View, at the African American Cultural Complex, visitors learn about the contributions of African Americans to our state and national identities. The Richard B. Harrison Library is home to an outstanding collection that is a major draw for researchers with a focus on the city's African American history. Genealogists flock to the Olivia Raney Local History Library to explore the library's collection of 18,178 items, most of which are local and family history-related.

The RHT hopes that throughout April, citizens will take the time to visit the city's local historic sites, museums, and libraries. While visiting these sites, it is hoped that visitors will gain a greater understanding of how our culture developed over time in response to challenges unimaginable to most of us in this modern age.

Interested in Local History? Visit Us Any Time!

While April has been designated as Raleigh History Month, the majority of Raleigh Heritage Trail sites are open to the public and host special events and programs year round. Find one near you!

North Carolina State Capitol
Union Square (1 East Edenton St.)
(919) 733-4994 ncstatecapitol.org

African-American Cultural Complex
119 Sunnybrook Road
(919) 250-9336 aaccmuseum.org

Haywood Hall House and Gardens
211 New Bern Place
(919) 832-8357 haywoodhall.org

Historic Yates Mill County Park
4620 Lake Wheeler Road
(919) 856-6675
wakegov.com/yatesmill

Olivia Raney Local History Library
4016 Carya Drive
(919) 250-1196 www.wakegov.com

Mordecai Historic Park
1 Mimosa Street
(919) 857-4364
raleighnc.gov/mordecai

Historic Oak View County Park
4028 Carya Drive
(919) 250-1013
wakegov.com/parks

Richard B. Harrison Library
1313 New Bern Ave
(919) 856-5720
wakegov.com/libraries

Raleigh City Museum
220 Fayetteville Street
(919) 832-3775
raleighcitymuseum.org

Joel Lane Museum House
Physical: 728 W. Hargett St.
(919) 833-3431 joellane.org



A VISIT TO POSSAGNO 2007

Our Day Trip to Antonio Canova's Museum, Birthplace, and Tomb

By Raymond L. Beck, Site Manager & Historian

In 1957, Ben F. Williams, Curator of the NC Museum of Art, and his wife Margaret, while studying the works of Antonio Canova (1757-1822) on a summertime trip to Venice, Italy, learned of a bicentennial exhibition of his sculptures at Canova's birthplace in the then-remote mountain town of Possagno. With limited assistance and direction from visitors' bureaus at that time--only a dozen years after the end World War II--Ben and Margaret rented a small French-made car and drove the tortuous mountain roads that eventually, due to poor signage and road conditions, led to Possagno. Very early (1978) in my career, I read of their exploits, detailed in an early *NC Museum of Art Bulletin* (Winter 1957-Spring 1958), and I hoped that someday I could visit those same Canova sites to witness both his life and his genius as a sculptor and artist.

Fifty years after Ben Williams' article was published, and in celebration of three decades of work at the State Capitol, my wife Deborah and I toured across northern Italy for two weeks (Bologna, Florence, Vicenza, and Venice). After reading Ben's rather harrowing adventures, we decided to attempt a similar journey of homage. However, we began our 'Possagno-quest' from the Veneto and Friuli region's city of Vicenza, best known as the architectural epicenter of Andrea Palladio, whose 16th century buildings later influenced both Thomas Jefferson and the American Federal-style of architecture (i.e. much of official Washington, D.C.).

After inquiring with the concierge at our hotel (Campo

Marzo), we learned that public busses could get us to Possagno and back. At 8:30 AM, on October 3 (the exact day of my 30th anniversary of work for the state), we departed Vicenza on an F.T.V. (Ferrovie Tramvie Vicentine) bus for the town of Bassano del Grappa, a picturesque town long known for pottery and a rather potent, locally produced brandy, Grappa, distilled from the lees of pressed wine grapes (graspa). As we traveled along the foothills of the Dolomite range, we passed the medieval walled city of Marostica, whose more recent claim to fame is its annual outdoor chess games--using costumed living chess pieces!

Following a ninety-minute layover at the bus transfer point, in an open square, and after several of my best Berlitz-phrased inquiries, the connecting CTM bus for Possagno arrived and we boarded. After fifty years, I am pleased to report to Ben that our roads to Possagno were well marked, well paved, and scenic! Passing through several small villages that flanked our route, we gradually climbed up to the town of Possagno. Our bus driver pointed to a small cluster of structures below the street's grade to our right that formed the Museo Canoviano. Coincidentally, the Canova Museum was holding the 250th anniversary exhibition!

As we entered and paid a nominal fee, I attempted to explain my interest in Canova and his only American-commissioned work, our original (1821) neoclassical statue of 'Georgio Washington' in martial Roman attire.



The staff directed us into the 'gypsotheca,' a museum of Canova's original full-scale works in plaster that were used as guides for sculpting his statuary from blocks of marble. These were the 'pointing up' models--each studded with small nails (*rèpere*)--whose purpose was to transfer the proper scale and dimensions onto the marble. Several of the works, damaged by artillery shells during World War I, remain unrestored after nearly a century while others have only recently been repaired.

Displayed in a contemporary wing of the museum were the objects of our quest--three miniature studies for our Washington statue; including an anatomical study and a fully-clad model. I was able to snap quick digital photos of each--just before I saw the small sign stating (only in Italian) 'No Photographs.' Nearby stood the full-scale 'pointing up' plaster statue used in 1820-21 and from which the 1910 plaster cast (now in the NC Museum of History) was made and also likely used in 1968-69 for the Capitol's 'duplicate original' marble copy sculpted by Professor Romano Vio.

Adjoining the gypsotheca was Canova's birthplace and ancestral home. Originally constructed in the late 1600s, by Pasino Canova, Antonio's grandfather, the 'L-shaped' farmhouse is a typical northern Italian Tuscan-style villa that sat on an extensive Canova family landholding. In the villa are displayed many of Canova's paintings (he also was a very talented portrait artist) and, in Canova's 1757 birth room stands a large glass case containing his sculpting tools, some formal clothing, a death mask (in plaster) and casts of his hands. On the room's walls are large framed engravings of all of his sculptural works.

In a square tower above his birth room, added by Canova in the late 1700s, was his window-lit painting studio. I was surprised to learn that most of Canova's sculptures were produced in his studios in Rome; which made sense, given the relative ease of obtaining and shipping marble



blocks from Carrara to Rome versus from Carrara up into the Dolomites to remote Possagno. The 'ascender' of the villa's 'L-shape' was a one-story arcade containing service rooms and a kitchen--a very typical arrangement for farm living in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Continued on next page



Previous page: Miniature study of 'Georgio Washington' (ca. 1818-20).

< The Canova Museum at Possagno has multiple buildings and exhibits the different periods and collections of work by Antonio Canova. Following the artist's death, his step-brother Monsignor Giovanni Battista Sartori closed his study in Rome and moved all the plaster casts, unsold sculptures, sketches, and paintings to warehouses in Possagno. In order to hold all of the above mentioned collections, Sartori commissioned a gallery to allow scholars, artists, and students to view Canova's entire body of work. Raymond Beck stands at the museum's entry. Above the originally open-arched wagon entry, a plaque reads, "Here was born Antonio Canova."

Possagno *Continued from pg. 5*

The villa's garden contains several Roman-era artifacts--including two large sandaled feet of stone from a massive Roman statue of an unknown subject. Other architectural fragments and features dot the garden's landscape.

Following our tour of the museum and birthplace, we visited Canova's tomb--a massive white Carrara marble church modeled by Canova after the Pantheon and completed eight years following his death. He funded the entire construction to serve the citizens of Possagno. Sitting atop a majestic hill above the town, it can be seen from over twenty miles away as it backs up against Mount Grappa and the Dolomite range.

After a quick lunch in a local café, we returned to the bus stop and waited another hour for the return bus to Bassano del Grappa. On this leg of our trip, our public transport doubled as a regional school bus. Hoards of

students--elementary through high school (all well-mannered and well-behaved!)--boarded and departed the bus at numerous stops along the way to Bassano. Another ninety-minute wait and transfer in Bassano and our return bus finally arrived in Vicenza. We reached our hotel at 5:30 p.m.--just in time to rendezvous with friends for a wonderful meal at a noted local trattoria.

After a few nervous moments with Italian busses running on a 'que sera sera' schedule, I achieved my long-time wish of visiting Possagno and Museo Canoviano. Who knows, but I believe that I may have been the first North Carolina state government official to have set foot in Possagno since 1957--and given its remote location, I don't think I'm wrong!

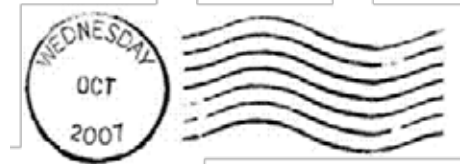
P.S. to Ben Williams: The parking lot was finished--just in time for the 250th anniversary.



Left: Raymond Beck stands in the garden of Canova's villa. His studio occupied the upper floor of the villa's tower. A third-generation stone-cutter, Canova was born in the room immediately below the studio on the second floor in 1757.

Below: Canova's Temple. Canova planned the temple himself and laid the first stone in July 1819. The neoclassical building, which still functions as a church today, was completed in 1830. The artist died in 1822 and was laid to rest inside the temple following its consecration.

Photographs by Raymond L. Beck & Deborah Hatton.



From the Site Manager: Telling Our Stories



Raymond L. Beck

It was wonderful seeing so many of our faithful and generous donors and patrons at the Foundation's April 5th Gala that featured several extraordinary photos of the Capitol by our friend, John M. Hall, who has captured this building's spirit and architectural grandeur on film as never before! We thank you for your continued patronage of this marvelous building and promise that we will continue to restore its detailing as carefully as is possible--through exhaustive research and with the best advices.

Recently, our site's curator of collections and researcher Tiffianna Honsinger mounted a well-researched and thoughtful exhibit on the tumultuous Reconstruction era in North Carolina and the rise and fall of our state's first African-American legislators (1868-1901). We are also grateful to the Historic Sites 'home office' for their insights and assistance in preparing that exhibition and to the Museum of History for the loan of several iconic artifacts.

I am pleased to report that progress is continuing to be made on a number of projects that we are hoping to move toward completion. We are now working with Mr. Teri Jefferson (Jefferson Art Lighting) of Ann Arbor, Michigan, to design, fabricate, and install electrified replicas of the

Capitol's 1866 gas chandeliers in all of the first floor offices. Photographs of those overhead fixtures have been discovered and will be used to produce seventeen replicas to supplant the now-incongruous 1970s fixtures that hang in those rooms. We thank the Foundation's executive committee and board members for underwriting Mr. Jefferson's on-site consultation last November.

Work is continuing to refine the details of a full-scale color rendering of a carpet design that might be replicated for future use in the legislative chambers as a more authentic period floor covering. Based on a mid-nineteenth century maroon and gold carpet fragment discovered in the Senate Chamber's attic in 1992, the design has been completed by a highly competent local textiles designer with a national reputation. The current and inaccurate House and Senate carpets are well over thirty years old--an embarrassment to our staff and for our thousands of annual visitors--and one of the few shabby elements on which the public (and state officials) make occasional comment.

This building and its grounds have wonderful and poignant stories to tell and many remain to be told. Through your generosity, we are now accomplishing more projects than we ever have and their successes are due to your financial and moral support. Thank you for all that you do to provide our staff with needed resources so that we can continue to 'tell our stories' so well and with an increased degree of accuracy.

Calendar of Events

With All Our Rights: North Carolina's First African American Legislators Exhibit

On display on the second floor until June 1

This exhibit explores the political climate at the Capitol following the end of Presidential Reconstruction and the emancipation of North Carolina's enslaved population. This exhibit spans the rise and fall of the state's first African American legislators, as well as the effects of the Reconstruction Amendments in North Carolina, the Freedmen's Convention in Raleigh, and the Constitutional Convention of 1868.

Raleigh Occupied Living History Event

April 26, Tours at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 1:30 and 2:30 p.m.

A Civil War-era troop encampment and historical interpreters will recall the April 1865 occupation of the State Capitol by troops of Union General William T. Sherman. Visitors will meet costumed interpreters portraying former Governors William A. Graham and David L. Swain; local plantation wife Margaret Devereux; Union Signal Corps Officer George Round; and newly freed slave Ellick Moore. Characters are based on personal letters, diaries and period accounts, and each will speak about hardships they have endured, life in Raleigh, and their hopes and dreams for the future.

Memorial Day Observance

May 26, 10 a.m.- 4 p.m.

A military encampment representing three centuries of military tradition will be set up on the Capitol grounds. A wreath-laying ceremony in honor of those North Carolinians who served during times of war will take place at the Veterans' Monument.

Photo Contest Entry Deadline

June 1, 5 p.m.

The State Capitol wants shutterbugs young and old to bring the past into focus. Our "Keeping the Past Present" photo contest invites amateur photographers of all ages to illustrate, in his or her view, how history shapes the present and future. Photographs must have been taken in the state of North Carolina during the past calendar year to be eligible for entry.

Entry materials available at www.ncstatecapitol.org.

Independence Day Celebration

July 4th, 11 a.m.- 3 p.m.

Enjoy the Capitol's annual family-oriented Independence Day celebration with patriotic music, food, and activities.

Become a Pillar of Society: Doric, Ionic, or Corinthian

State Capitol Society Membership & Donation Form

Membership benefits include a handsome cast-metal State Capitol pin, yearly membership card, subscription to *Anthemion* quarterly newsletter, reduced rates for annual history excursions, reduced admission to Capitol social events, invitations to public programs, & special tours by request for your organization or company.

Levels of Membership

- | | |
|---|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior/ Student Membership | \$10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Membership | \$20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Membership | \$40 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rotunda Membership | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doric Membership | \$500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ionic Membership | \$1,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corinthian Membership
(corporate 2 years, individual 3 years) | \$2,500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crown Membership
(corporate 3 years, individual 5 years) | \$5,000 |

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